

Remarks

Applicant maintains that the Salazar reference is inapplicable because the Salazar external devices 2-11 (*see, e.g.,* Fig. 1b) cannot correspond to both the claimed user-controllable devices and user-interface units, which provide user-selectable information to the user and communicate with both a user-interface control device and a signal-repeating base station as in claims 1-14. Moreover, the Examiner has repeated the rejections from the previous Office Action without adequately responding to Applicant's arguments as is required. It is Applicant's desire to resolve these issues without having to appeal.

The Final Office Action dated August 10, 2006 indicated that claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Salazar *et al.* (U.S. 5,802,467).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Section 102(b) rejections of claims 1-14, because the cited portions of the Salazar reference fail to correspond to all of the claimed limitations. Regarding independent claim 1, the Examiner fails to cite to any portion of the Salazar reference that corresponds to claimed limitations directed to zone-located user-interface units that provide user-selectable information to the user and that communicate with both a user-interface control device and a signal-repeating base station. The Examiner fails to cite any specific aspect of the Salazar reference as corresponding to the zone-located user-interface units; instead, the Examiner generally cites to Fig. 1b shown below.

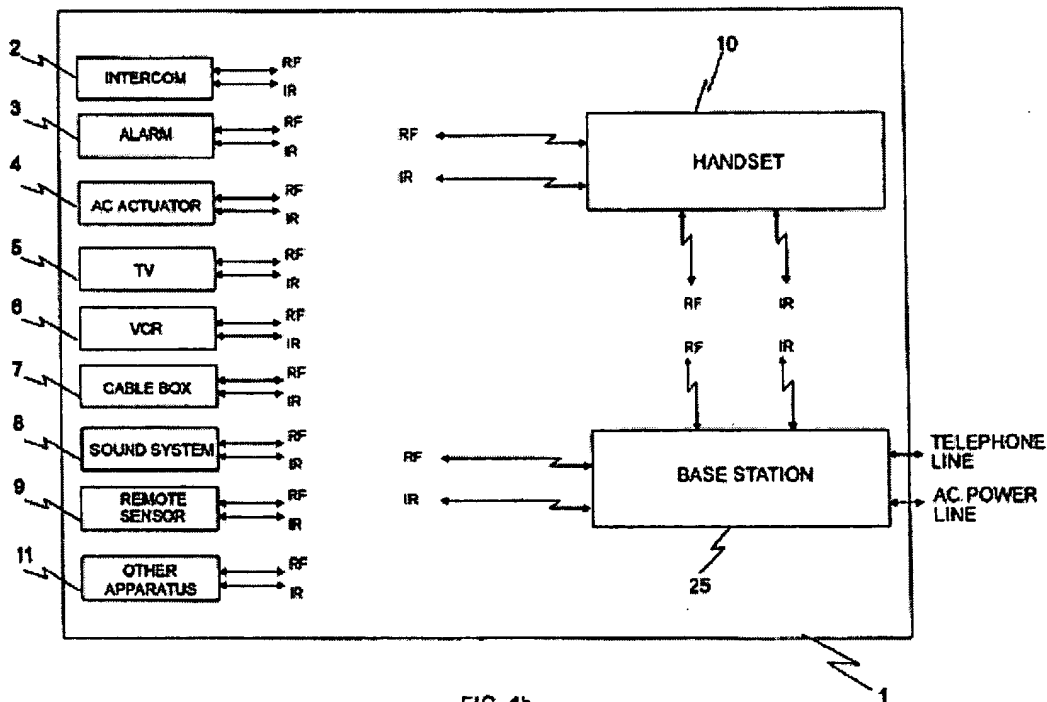


FIG. 1b

The Salazar reference teaches that base station 25 communicates with external devices 2-11 by using RF and IF communications links (*see, e.g.*, Fig. 1b and col. 23, lines 6-13); however, these external devices are not zone-located user-interface units as in the claimed invention. It appears that the Examiner is citing to external devices 2-11 as both the zone-located user-controllable devices and the zone-located user-interface units of the claimed invention. While external devices 2-11 may have user input controls, these user input controls do not provide user-selectable information to the user because the user inputs of the external devices do not communicate with base station 25 or handset 10. Therefore, the Salazar reference does not teach zone-located user-interface units as in the claimed invention. Without a presentation of correspondence to each of the claimed limitations, the Section 102(b) rejections of claim 1, and claims 2-13, which depend from claim 1, are improper and cannot be maintained. Applicant accordingly requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

Applicant further traverses the Section 102(b) rejections of claims 1-14 based, *inter alia*, on the reasons previously presented. The Examiner repeats the rejections from the previous Office Action and fails to adequately address Applicant's prior arguments. Specifically, the Examiner failed to respond to the following arguments:

- That the previous Office Action did not provide correspondence to the communication being otherwise provided by at least one of the zone-located user-interface units as claimed in claims 9-10 and 12-13. *See, e.g.*, Office Action Response filed May 19, 2006, page 6, lines 6-8.
- That the previous Office Action failed to show any teaching corresponding to a data port for downloading information for configuring both the signal-repeating base-station and the user-interface control device as required by claim 14. *See, e.g.*, Office Action Response filed May 19, 2006, page 5, lines 27-30.

The M.P.E.P. dictates that the Examiner should take note of the applicant's arguments and answer the substance of them. *See* M.P.E.P. § 707.07(f). This is consistent with the purpose of aiding the applicant in judging the propriety of continuing the prosecution, as indicated in 37 C.F.R. § 1.104(a)(2) and 35 U.S.C. § 132. M.P.E.P. § 707.07(f) further urges that the Examiner state the reasons for his or her position (regarding Applicant's arguments) in the record.

Furthermore, the Examiner in the instant Office Action fails to cite any reference corresponding to limitations directed to the communication being otherwise provided by at

least one of the zone-located user-interface units as required by claims 9-10 and 12-13. The Salazar reference does not teach zone-located user-interface units as in the claimed invention for the reasons discussed above in connection with the rejection of claim 1. Therefore, the Salazar reference does not teach that the communication is provided by at least one of the zone-located user-interface units as claimed in claims 9-10 and 12-13. The Examiner also fails to provide a cite to any reference that corresponds to claim 14 limitations directed to a data port for downloading information for configuring both the signal-repeating base-station and the user-interface control device. Moreover, the Examiner has not provided any cite to any reference that corresponds to the claimed limitations of claims 5-14 in the instant Office Action or in the previous Office Action. Accordingly, the Section 102(b) rejections of claims 1-14 are improper and Applicant requests that they be withdrawn.

In view of the above discussion, Applicant believes that the rejection has been overcome and the application is in condition for allowance. A favorable response is requested. Should there be any remaining issues that could be readily addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (651) 686-6633.

Respectfully submitted,

CRAWFORD MAUNU PLLC
1270 Northland Drive, Suite 390
St. Paul, MN 55120
651/686-6633 x101

Dated: October 6, 2006

By: 

Robert J. Crawford
Reg. No. 32,122